USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Fact Sheet

USAID Support for LGBTQI+ People

As stated by President Biden in his February 2021 Memorandum, "All human beings should be treated with respect and dignity and should be able to live without fear no matter who they are or whom they love." USAID is committed to advancing the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI+) people around the world and meaningfully including them in development programming.

On his first day in office, President Biden issued an Executive Order on Preventing and Combatting Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation in all federal agencies. In this spirit, President Biden proclaimed that, "it shall be the policy of the United States to pursue an end to violence and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics, and to lead by the power of our example in the cause of advancing the human rights of LGBTQI+ persons around the world."

USAID proudly joins this government-wide effort with its own commitment to advance the human rights of LGBTQI+ people around the world, including members of its own workforce, and supports efforts to protect them from violence, stigma, discrimination, and criminalization. In 2014, USAID released the **LGBT Vision for Action**, which reflects USAID's commitment to protect the human rights of LGBTQI+ people in all programming and guided USAID work in previous administrations. Additionally, in 2018 USAID developed **Suggested Approaches for Integrating Inclusive Development Across the Program Cycle and in Mission Operations** to identify ways to include people who are underrepresented, marginalized, and/or in vulnerable situations—including LGBTQI+ people—in USAID's work.

USAID Support for
LGBTQI+ People

Highlights of USAID's programming on behalf of LGBTQI+ people worldwide include the following:

1. **Supporting Local LGBTI+ Civil Society Organizations (CSOs):** Through the Multi-Donor LGBTI Global Human Rights Initiative (GHRI), USAID partners with other donors and private foundations to support local LGBTI-led organizations through grants, emergency assistance, research, and capacity building on social and behavior change communications. In its first year, GHRI grantee partners provided victim assistance or legal aid to LGBTI individuals and trained LGBTI human rights defenders. Resources from the GHRI increased emergency response support to 30 LGBTI CSOs and provided 45 grants to LGBTI-led organizations to advance decriminalization and nondiscrimination.
2. **Funding Human Rights Programming:** USAID provides funds to promote opportunities and respond to human rights challenges affecting LGBTQI+ people worldwide. Funds provide grants to local LGBTQI-led organizations and support in emergency situations.
3. **Supporting Groundbreaking Research:** USAID supports the Global Barometer of Gay Rights and the Global Barometer of Transgender Rights, which measure the extent to which countries protect or persecute LGBT people. The Global Barometers contain data on 203 countries worldwide and have been reviewed by partners in over 40 countries, including grassroots activists, international and local organizations, academics, policy professionals, and human rights consultants. USAID also supports the Global Acceptance Index, which tracks anti-LGBT stigma across time for 174 countries.
4. **Recognizing the Third Gender in Bangladesh National Census:** In Bangladesh, USAID supports legal professionals to help LGBTQI+ people better understand their rights. This includes convening other stakeholders, including human rights activists, journalists, medical professionals, and religious leaders, to increase awareness of the challenges facing LGBTQI+ people. After the Government formally recognized its *hijra* population as a third gender, USAID's support helped mobilize the National Human Rights Commission to include a third gender option in the 2021 National Census for the first time.
5. **Preventing Gender-Based Violence:** In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, USAID works with communities to prevent and reduce the incidence of gender-based violence (GBV), and improve access to quality care for GBV survivors, including LGBTQI+ people.
6. **Conducting Advocacy for Policy Change:** Through the Engagement for Equity activity, USAID supported local CSOs' advocacy efforts to amend the Civil Status Law in Kosovo, and draft a legal sub-provision allowing sex markers to be modified in public registers and government-issued documents. In December 2019, Kosovo's Court of Appeals ruled that citizens have the right to change their sex marker in official documents, which is essential for recognizing gender identity for transgender people and enables them to access social services without discrimination and reduces violence and harassment.
7. **Addressing Anti-LGBTQI+ Stigma:** Since February 2021, USAID has trained 257 government officers from Guatemala's Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman and government officers from different public services, such as the Public Ministry (Attorney General) and the Ministry of the Interior, regarding the reduction of stigma and discrimination against LGBTQI+ people.
8. **HIV Services and Inclusive Care for Transgender People:** Through the PEPFAR Key Population Investment Fund (KPIF), USAID increased tailored HIV services and inclusive care for transgender people, reaching more than 50,000 individuals. In Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, and Nigeria, transgender-led CSOs delivered health services (including transgender-specific health and HIV services), emergency housing, and economic empowerment programs. In Burma and South Africa, the first transgender health center was organized, drawing upon best practice from Thailand. In addition, KPIF has supported national- and regional-level advocacy to address discriminatory and punitive laws and policies that affect the human rights of LGBTQI+ people, including the criminalization of same-sex relations, gender identity, and gender expression.